

 INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	<b>Chapter 4: Assessment</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> October 1, 2015
	<b>Section 1: Reviewing the Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) Intake Report and Other Records</b>	<b>Version:</b> 6

## STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will thoroughly review the [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114\) \(310\)](#) (Child Abuse and/or Neglect [CA/N] intake report) and other available records in order to gain insight into potential issues prior to making contact with a child and family.

DCS will consider the following when reviewing the CA/N intake report and other records:

1. The nature and extent of the family's current and previous involvement with DCS, Division of Family Resources (DFR), and community-based services;
2. Any safety concerns existing for the child and for the Family Case Manager (FCM); and
3. Any issues that should be discussed with the child and family members.

The DCS local office will ensure all assigned reports are sent to the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) on a daily basis by fax, email, or hand delivery. Reports received on weekends or holidays will be delivered on the following business day.

### Code References

[IC 31-36-3-3 \(b\) Notification to Department; investigation of a child; notification to parents](#)

## PROCEDURE

The FCM will:

1. Review the CA/N intake report;

**Note:** Per [IC 31-36-3-3](#) DCS must conduct an assessment concerning a child who voluntarily enters an emergency shelter or shelter care facility without the presence or consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian. DCS must conduct the assessment no later than 48 hours following notification by the emergency shelter or shelter care facility of the child's name, location, and whether the child alleges CA/N.

2. Review prior DCS and DFR contact with the family via the following sources if available:
  - a. Case management system and/or
  - b. Child support records: Indiana Support Enforcement Tracking System (ISETS) Child Support Inquiry Web Tool;
3. Discuss the CA/N intake report with the assigned FCM of any open DCS assessment or ongoing case;
4. Review pertinent information from outside sources (e.g., LEA, schools, public utility companies, Bureau of Motor Vehicles [BMV]);

5. Obtain and review additional confidential information as needed (e.g., medical records, social services records);
6. Consider the following when reviewing records:
  - a. The nature and extent of the family's current and previous involvement with DCS, DFR, and community-based services,
  - b. Any safety concerns exist for the child and for the FCM, and
  - c. Any issues should be discussed with the child and family members.
7. Determine if the alleged perpetrator is a DCS employee or a child care worker. See policy, [2.3 Child Care Worker Assessment Review Process](#).

The Local DCS Office will ensure all assigned reports are sent to the appropriate LEA jurisdiction on a daily basis by fax, email, or hand delivery. Reports received on weekends or holidays will be delivered the following business day.

## **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

### **Unsubstantiated CA/N History**

Upon FCM Supervisor approval of an unsubstantiated assessment, DCS will retain a hard copy of the documentation relating to the assessment of CA/N in the DCS local office for six (6) months. At that time, the hard copy file will be transferred to the records center in accordance with the [Records Retention Schedule](#).

### **Access to Unsubstantiated CA/N Records**

Documentation in electronic form will be maintained until 24 years after the birth of the youngest child named as an alleged victim of CA/N in the unsubstantiated DCS assessment report. This documentation may be used in the assessment of a subsequent report concerning the same child or family; however, DCS may not rely solely on the unsubstantiated history to support substantiation. Unsubstantiated case documentation will not be available when it has been expunged to comply with a court order.

### **Thorough Review of Records**

A thorough review of the CA/N intake information enables the FCM to begin initial assessment of the child's safety. Factors such as the child's age and vulnerability and the family history are critical in this initial stage of the assessment.

## **FORMS AND TOOLS**

1. [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114\) \(310\)](#)
2. [Records Retention Schedule](#)

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

N/A